

On this Father's Day, I pray God's best for you all!

MYESE!

Pastor Heard

Part 16: Elevate Your Life!

Text:

Ephesians 2:6 (NIV) - *"and God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus."*

Luke 9:1 (NIV) - "When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases."

Mark 5:14-20 (NKJV) - "So those who fed the swine fled, and they told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that had happened. [v15] Then they came to Jesus, and saw the one who had been demon-possessed and had the legion, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. [v16] And those who saw it told them how it happened to him who had been demon-possessed, and about the swine. [v17] Then they began to plead with Him to depart from their region. [v18] And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him. [v19] However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you." [v20] And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled."

Luke 8:38 (NKJV) - "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him."

- A. On this day, I want to celebrate the fathers who have come to be with us.
1. Most fathers are mindful of their legacy. We want to be remembered, cherished, and to make a difference in the lives of those we love.
 2. In the spirit of leaving a legacy, my topic for today is:

"Recovering What the Enemy Has Stolen!"

- B. In our teaching on The Twelve Dimensions of Spiritual Authority, the fifth dimension, "Authority Over Demonic Systems," related the story of Jesus delivering the demoniac of Gadara from a legion of demons that had bound and wrecked his life.

1. In that lesson, we defined *demonic system*, its theological implications, and how to address them.
2. The final description of demonic systems contains a deeply moving aspect that involves human interest. Had it been fully revealed, I have a feeling that this man's story would have been a New York Times best seller!
3. Think of what this man had lost! Because the biblical account only portrays him as a demoniac, we are left with the impression that his whole adult life was spent in this condition. But that is not so. His earlier years were definitely not spent among the tombs!
 - a. Who knows what his past may have been? Perhaps he had been a prosperous, successful businessman—or even a religious leader.
 - b. He certainly had a family—a mother and father . . . and maybe a wife and children. I say this because Satan had a specific reason for attacking him so aggressively!
 - c. While the enemy wants to harm us all, it seems that the more powerful a person is destined to become, the more diligently the enemy seeks to destroy him.
 - d. Consider Moses and Jesus. No sooner had Satan sensed the tremendous impact of their mission, he did his best to destroy

them as infants, before they could fulfill their God-ordained assignment.

- e. If you feel that you've endured untold suffering in your lifetime, be encouraged—not discouraged! The more you endure, the greater influence you will have on others. That's why the enemy fears you!
- f. Somewhere along the way, a door in this man's life had been opened to the enemy. What may have begun as a simple attraction, became a temptation. Experimentation then led to an excursion of activities and events he never imagined would control him. Gradually, as he became addicted and hooked, an oppressive spirit began to take charge. As his depression deepened, he finally realized that he was unable to free himself. From there, he became totally possessed by not just one—but a multitude of demonic spirits.

4. The downward spiral continued until he had lost everything!

- a. Whether he once had a wife and children, a business, or a prominent position of respect and honor, we do not know. But whatever he had once claimed as his own, was now gone.
- b. His nightmares continually digressed until he was absolutely wild, disowned, rejected by society, without a home—or even clothes to wear.
- c. In this final stage of rage and violence, he terrorized the surrounding communities. All he could wish for was just to die!

C. Then . . . the prow of a small boat bumped against the gravel shore near the cemetery where he was confined—and Jesus stepped off the boat.

- 1. Something about this Man ignited a spark of hope. But then he felt the demons' terrible agitation and dreadful fear as they recognized who was coming toward them!

2. Immediately, the man began running toward this Man . . . and the rest is history. Jesus set him free!

D. The compelling question then is: what happened AFTER Jesus set him free? Was he restored to his former life and family? Did he recover what the enemy had stolen from him? I BELIEVE HE DID!

1. With a grateful heart, the man begged to follow Jesus and be a disciple the rest of his life. But Jesus' response to his request is quite revealing.
2. How many evangelists would have **gladly** welcomed this new follower? Just think how his powerful testimony could stir people to give when it was time to take up the collection! . . . But not Jesus.
3. To Him, the man's deliverance story had only begun. There was so much more to come. The story would never be complete until all that he had lost had been restored!
4. **Mark 5:19-20 (NKJV)** - "Jesus commanded him to go home."
5. **Luke 8:38 (NIV)** refers not just to family, but a host of friends.
6. To complete his deliverance, the man was told to go back home. Not to start over again, but to **take back** all that the enemy had stolen!

E. It's time for men of God to seriously consider **taking back** what the enemy has stolen. It's not enough to merely cancel Satan's assignments . . . if we can **recover** all he has taken from us!

1. God is all about **restoration!** From Genesis to Revelation, **restoration** is a major theme of the Bible!
2. In Genesis, God promised to **restore** to mankind what the enemy had stolen in the garden.
3. In the 23rd Psalm, David said, "The Lord is the **restorer** of our souls."
4. When Solomon dedicated the new temple, he prayed that if men had lost anything of value because of wrongdoing, that God would hear and **restore** what had been lost.

5. After failing Him so many times, the nation of Israel's story is about crying out to God for **restoration!**
6. In Malachi, for those who honored God with His tithe, He promised to **restore** all that the enemy had stolen from them.
7. The first four books of the New Testament are about Jesus coming to **restore** the relationship between the Father and man.

F. Before revealing how to take back what the enemy has stolen, let me first stress the importance of not allowing the enemy to **steal** from you!

1. A father can do certain things to prevent this from happening. We shall talk about that in a moment.
2. Please understand that THE ENEMY WANTS MEN! The story in our text is about a possessed "man"--not a possessed woman.
3. Make no mistake; the enemy also seeks to destroy women and children. But his favorite, most easily accomplished strategy is to manipulate the leader of the home into becoming useless and ineffective.
4. If he can control men, the entire family will suffer and the children will go astray.

G. So, how can we take back what has been stolen? The strategy is found in **1 Samuel, Chapter 30**, when David recovered what the Amalekites had stolen from him at Ziklag. What worked for David—will also work for you!

1. **1 Samuel 30:6 (NKJV)** says that David found "strength in the Lord." This means that men must first ask God for strength.
2. **1 Samuel 30:7 (NKJV)** says that David went to the priest and asked for the ephod, a garment worn only by the priests.
3. Though David was not of the tribe of Levi, he became a priest and a worshipper for his own family. He understood that success only comes to the man who stands as priest for his family.

4. Do not fight the enemy in your role as a man—or as a husband or father. Fight as a priest unto God! Flesh and blood cannot defeat the devil, but if you're in the spirit, no weapon formed against you can prosper!
5. **1 Samuel 30:8 (NKJV)** says that David *chose* to seek God.
 - a. You *must* seek God! The battle cannot be won without His help!
 - b. Attorneys and counselors can assist, but if you intend to recover anything, you'll need God's intervention!
6. **1 Samuel 30:17 (MSG)** - David launched a full scale attack! He fought from twilight until the evening of the next day.
7. **1 Samuel 30:18-19 (NKJV)** - David recovered everything!

H. Demand that the enemy repay you SEVEN-FOLD!

1. **Proverbs 6:30-31 (NET)** - "People do not despise a thief when he steals to fulfill his need when he is hungry. Yet if he is caught he must repay seven times over, he might even have to give all the wealth of his house."
2. **1 Samuel 30:20 (NKJV)** – David also took spoils belonging to the enemy and made them pay "interest" for what had been stolen from him and his men.
3. So, if the enemy stole your house, claim seven!
4. If he stole your family, claim another family in its place—with seven times the happiness!
5. If he took your job, claim a new one with seven times the income!